

anti-gay epithets at Geske and punching him in the face repeatedly. Reeling from the attack, Geske's arm fell through the passenger side window, where another attacker grabbed onto it. The driver then got back in the car and sped off with Geske's arm still trapped. The victim was dragged several blocks before he broke free, suffering scrapes and sprained fingers in the process. The attack is being investigated as a bias crime and the assailants are still at large.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. Federal laws intended to protect individuals from heinous and violent crimes motivated by hate are woefully inadequate. This legislation would better equip the Government to fulfill its most important obligation by protecting new groups of people as well as better protecting citizens already covered under deficient laws. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

TIBET

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the recent violence in Tibet.

I am deeply saddened and angered by the events which have unfolded this past month between ethnic Tibetans and China. In March, China's decades of repression of Tibet exploded into widespread riots, both in the Tibetan autonomous region and ethnic Tibetan areas of China. The Chinese Government responded by imposing a near-total media blackout, and by deploying an overwhelming number of police and military personnel. Within that darkness, dozens of people were killed.

It is still unclear who did the killing, or who was killed. It is unclear what set off the violence. It is even unclear how many people were killed. The Chinese Government claims 22 deaths; independent Tibetan sources say between 79 and 140. There have been a similarly disputed number of people arrested.

One of government's primary functions is to enforce law and order within its borders. But the unrest and violence in Tibet is the direct result of over 50 years of Chinese oppression of Tibetan ethnic, cultural, and political rights. It is the result of China's repression of Tibetan Buddhism and a stream of personal insults against the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama, whom I am greatly honored to have met, is honored for his commitment to peace and reconciliation. I cannot think of a time when such a message is more welcome than it is today.

China, on the other hand, offers no similar message of tolerance and peace. Just this morning, there was an article in the Washington Post, in which a human rights lawyer and convert to Christianity lives under constant police surveillance. He is intermittently

beaten and harassed by police, who sometimes prohibit him from attending church. For ethnic Tibetans, Chinese human rights violations can be much worse. China's efforts over the past half century to repress Tibetan rights are unacceptable, outrageous and in violation of China's own laws.

I know that many of my fellow Americans stand with me in this belief. As such, I was proud to introduce with my colleague from California a resolution calling on China to ensure the protection of Tibetan rights and culture. The resolution demands that China allow a full and transparent accounting of the recent violence. China must cease the political reeducation of monks, and allow them to possess pictures of the Dalai Lama. It must also release peaceful protestors, and allow independent journalists free access throughout China. In addition, the resolution calls on the U.S. State Department to fully implement the 2002 Tibet Policy Act, particularly the establishment of a U.S. consulate in Lhasa.

I was exceptionally pleased to note that my resolution was unanimously agreed to last night. I believe these measures would go a long way toward safeguarding Tibetan rights, easing the suffering of ethnic Tibetans, and preventing the outbreak of any further violence.

NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I talk about public health. As I hope many of my colleagues are aware, this week is National Public Health Week, and this year's goal is to increase the Nation's awareness of the serious effects of global warming on the public's health.

When I say global warming, people think of many things. You might think of polar bears, vanishing glaciers, or rising sea levels, but you are not likely to think of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is unfortunate because there is a direct connection between global warming and the health of our Nation.

A warming planet will affect food, water, shelter, and the spread of infectious diseases. At the same time, we will face more extreme weather events. Storms, floods, droughts, and heat waves will have an acute impact, particularly on hundreds of millions of people in the developing world.

Climate change is very much a public health issue.

The science behind global warming is no longer debatable. Scientists from around the globe have stated in the strongest possible terms that the climate is changing, and human activity is to blame. These changes are already dramatically affecting human health around the world.

The World Health Organization reported that the climate change which occurred from 1961 to 1990 may already be causing over 150,000 deaths or the loss of over 5.5 million disability-ad-

justed life years annually starting in 2000.

These numbers are staggering, but they should not be surprising: climate change influences our living environment on the most fundamental level, which means it affects the basic biological functions critical to life.

It impacts the air we breathe and the food available for us to eat. It impacts the availability of our drinking water and the spread of diseases that can make us sick.

Last year's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, report on climate change put to rest the arguments of many skeptics. But the frequently cited report of Working Group One is just one of three separate IPCC reports. Working Group Two simultaneously issued a sobering report on the impacts of climate change. They predicted that up to 250 million people across Africa could face water shortages by 2020, and that agriculture fed by rainfall could drop by 50 percent. Crop yields in central and South Asia could drop by 30 percent. People everywhere who depend on glaciers or snow pack for their drinking water will be forced to find new supplies.

This is not speculation. These effects are already measurable. The World Health Organization predicts that asthma deaths will rise by 20 percent over the next 10 years, and that climate change is causing greater outbreaks of Rift Valley fever and the spread of malaria in higher elevations in Africa, and more frequent cholera epidemics in Bangladesh. The CDC is preparing for more heat-wave planning and forecasting.

The public health costs of global climate change are likely to be greatest to the nations of the world who have contributed least to the problem. As the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, we have a moral obligation to help these countries, which are also least likely to have the resources to prepare or respond themselves. Any strategies for managing climate change impacts must address this unequal burden, and to take into account their unique challenges and needs.

These impacts are different in different parts of the world—and equally troubling, they are disproportionately burdensome for the world's more vulnerable populations. Children, the elderly, the poor, and those with chronic and other health conditions are the most vulnerable to the negative health impacts of climate change.

There is growing recognition that we must act, and we must act now. Fortunately, many of the choices individuals should make for the sake of their health—and the health of their communities—are the same choices that benefit the health of the planet. Making the climate change issue real means helping people understand how the way they live affects themselves and others, whether through their transportation choices, their use of water and electricity or the types of goods they purchase and consume.